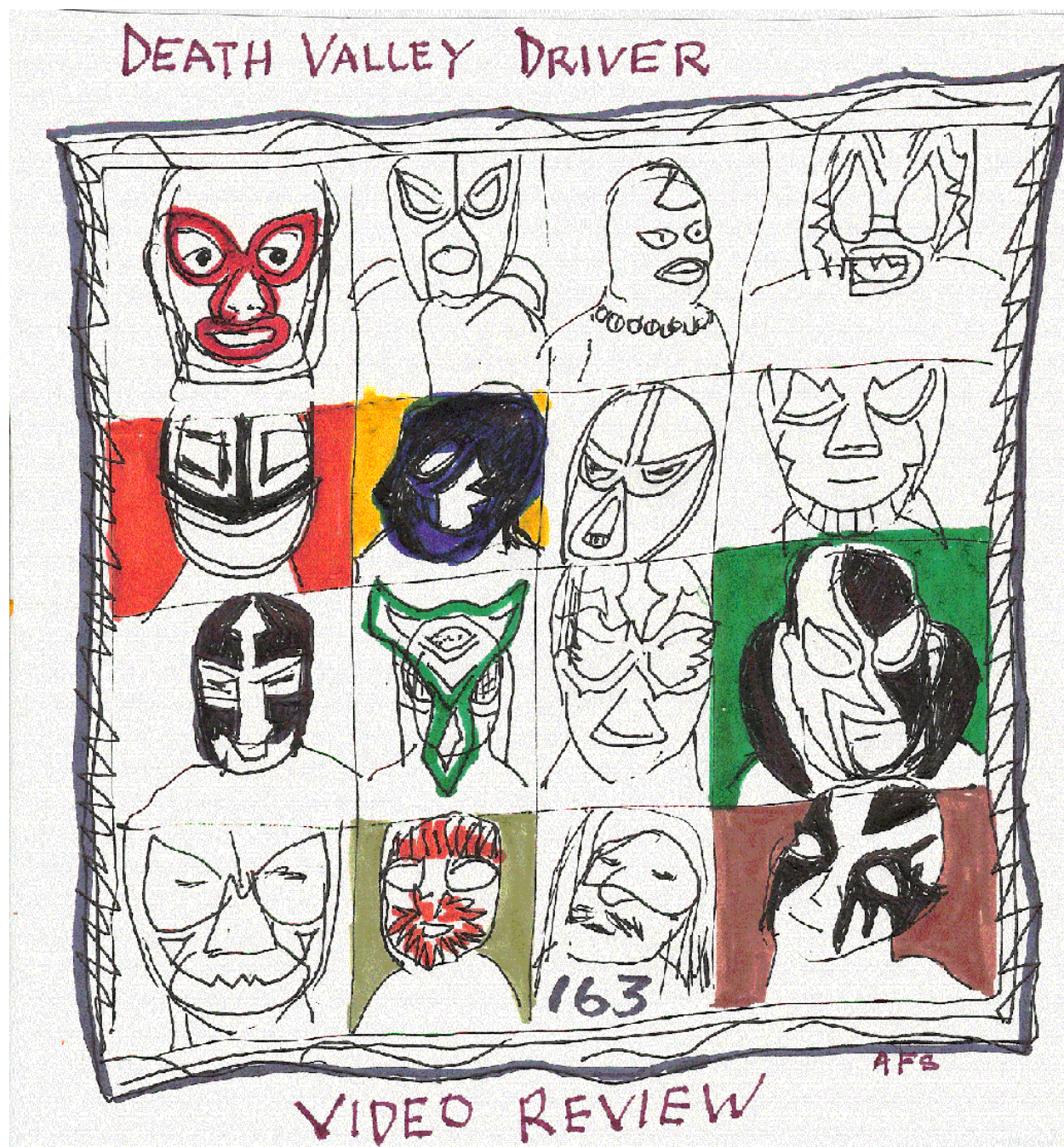




WELCOME TO THE DEATH VALLEY DRIVER VIDEO REVIEW #163!

Your cover is by Bay Area artist, Andrea Schneider.

~@~

ROH UNIFIED-8/12/2006

RN: ROB NAYLOR

PAS: PHIL SCHNEIDER

RN: So ROH took what I perceived to be a gamble and did a UK tour. I got to say, I wasn't sure if they had enough fans of ROH over there to not actually come out of this in the red. But apparently, I was proven wrong a few weeks later as they had sold a strong amount of more expensive tickets and to the tune of 1600, in fact. I didn't think that would happen, given most of their top talent like Cide, Joe and AJ Styles weren't on the shows.

PAS: They did a pretty good job putting on what felt like a "big show" with most of their names not on it. I didn't even notice Homicide wasn't on the show until I read what Rob wrote, and he is one of the big reasons I get shows.

Cabana vs Sydal vs Storm vs Spud:

RN: I think that four ways in ROH are overdone, but done correctly, I can enjoy them. But mostly they tend to run together. This one stood out since there was a great deal of comedy and the UK fans really took to the ROH wrestlers as superstars, which I really didn't realize. I mean, Sydal was over waaay more in the UK than he is in the States. And Cabana, who's toured their often was a definite favorite. I've read some say this was a spotfest, but I definitely disagree. It was laid out and closed with the two biggest moves possible on the same person who never recovered and lost the fall.

PAS: The crowd was weird, they really didn't seem into Storm or Spud at all. It was like when the WWE runs in Japan or Mexico, the local crowds don't want to see Muta or Mistico they want to see Helmsley and Kane. Cabana and Sydal were the first ROH guys out of the curtain so they got the big reaction.

RN: Some of my favorite stuff in this was Cabana cringing in agony at the bell when Spud shook his hand, doing the flip flop fly and the best was when Bana did an ode to Big Daddy in the UK by giving the smaller wrestlers belly bumps like Daddy did and they all bounced and bumped like they were hit by lightning. Great stuff. Fun opener with a great finish and Hero hits the ring postmatch to enormous jeers and sets up the later match with Bana.

PAS: I liked this a fair amount too. This was a case where all of Cabana's goofy Euro stuff really worked, and it was clear that Storm probably worked Johnny Kidd in a carnival so he really knew how to stooge for that stuff. For your match with dives, it sort of needed crazier dives- I have seen Sydal and Storm do a lot nuttier stuff.

Jimmy Rave vs Davey Andrews:

RN: Huge amounts of tp for Rave in this and it was nice to see Nana in one of his last ROH appearances. Should be interesting to see how ROH tries to repackage Rave to use him effectively again.

Davey's theme of "Runnin with the Devil" is freaking great. ANY Van Halen *Roth of course* makes for the best theme music.

The reports weren't lying, the British fans are the most chant happy fans out there. I guess if one watches soccer and how every few seconds you have those Manchester fans chanting every moment, this could have been expected....but wow, it was nuts how often these fans

would just start up a rooting chant. This was also the infamous “little kids” chanting match. While I didn’t like kids yelling at the top of their lungs “Fuck off” or “Hogan” for whatever reason...I think the “Past your bedtimes” and “STFU” chants were a bit much. But CHRIST almighty did them kids have high pitch.

PAS: The crowd was really hot for the two main events, but they were really irritating in the undercard. You had a "THIS IS AWESOME" chant in all three of the opening matches. I am surprised Meltzer didn't drop the ****+ on every match on the card.

RN: Match itself had Davey dictating the pace early with numerous armlocks and getting them back with armdrags etc...before just kicking the shit out of Rave at one point to a huge pop. Rave is a great bad guy, as it seems he’s attempted to take nearly ANY flashy moves out of his arsenal. Punches, chinlocks, kicks, hairpulls, eyegouges etc. Nothing pretty, so everytime Davey hit a comeback kick or forearm, Rave would try to cut him off.

PAS: You knew me and Rob wouldn't agree on everything. I didn't get that sense from Rave here at all. Rave is a great bad guy, but for large parts of this match it felt like he was back working Ted Petty Invitational indy dream match Jimmy Rave. Davey Richards is a guy I first saw selling merch at an NWA Virginia show. Apparently he was criticizing an Old School Empire v. Platinum Icons match because "no one was working heel or face." I saw him work KENTA in New Jersey and he worked that match 2.9, This is Awesome style. Not my thing, but kind of what you would expect out of a KENTA dream match. Still this was against Jimmy Rave in the midst of a feud, and it still felt like an indy touring match they would bring into an MCW restart.

RN: One crazy spot in this was Rave and Davey doing the Hennig/Hart suplex from in the ring over the top rope spot from the King of the Ring. It was pretty nutty given the building had hardwood floors. Richards springboard missile dropkick into a forward nip-up POWER UP deal like Dynamite used to do is great. And his kick combo into a German is awesome as well. Fans really got into this as the match went on. Rave did the running knee that nearly ko'd Davey in NYC and gave him a black eye also and the announcer keenly referenced it to build drama. Finish saw Davey hit one of the illest looking Tiger Driver dropped into a brainbuster type deal ever done. The thud of Rave’s neck and head hitting mat was gross. Good stuff. Davey and Rave bring out the best in each’s style, I believe. This actually was my third favorite match they’ve had, since I really was high on the Destiny match in CT in June and also the NYC match a bit more. But this match had the most decisive finish.

PAS: There was some nice spots, but nice spots isn't what Rave does well, and in the realm of "big spots hit well" Richards spots weren't as big, or hit as well as the guys in the tag title match.

RN: Briscoes chimed in with a wonderfully articulate promo, one of a line of classic promos they’ve been doing since about July... “KintO, ya bet be read, it gown be tahm, git read, Memba one thang, it ya ahhh, boyeee...MAN UP”... These things are fantastic. I honestly don’t know if the Briscoes ACTUALLY speak as poorly as this, but maaan, these promos are turning the corner on them. Not pretty or polished at all, but you get a sense of character from these dudes

this way, which is more than I can say for 70 percent of promos in the same vein done in most of the indies. . . KINTO....???

PAS: Yeah the Briscoes are awesome in this role. I total buy them as half drunk Delaware white trash. Really makes me enjoy their matches more. Fuck Konnan, I want to see a microphone battle between the Briscoes and Homicide.

Claudio vs Whitmer:

RN: I really liked the tone this match had. It was angry and not "competitive". The CZW vs. ROH feud actually gave Whitmer both an edge and now a sympathetic vibe in ROH. Instead of wrestling and counter wrestling, this saw Claudio (CZW proud) attack Whitmer, who'd just beaten Necro a few shows prior, and choke Whitmer out with his own ring jacket and gouge his eyes across the ropes.

Whitmer hit a nice looking Tope con ELBOW TO THE FUCKIN FACE on Claudio sending him backwards knocking the railing down into some fans. One thing I don't like that Whitmer does as a good guy, is play to the fans. I hate to sound like Jesse Ventura on Superstars in 1987 here, but "PAY ATTENTION to the opponent, the fans ain't winnin the match for you". Claudio of course, took advantage of that and while brawling in the seats...through Whitmer through a series of unfoldable chairs, which I'd gather isn't very pleasant.

I liked the transition of Whitmer getting back into this...as Claudio went to break his back outside in the seats, by suplexing him backward onto a standing guardrail...but Whitmer reversed and CC landed on the wooden floor. All in all, I liked this, as I said, because of the hate involved...CC choking Whitmer with an ROH banner, kickin Whitmer in the face arrogantly as he tries to get to his feet for a comeback, even the finish with Whitmer in the ropes gaining a pin I liked, whether intentional or not. It wasn't a GREAT match at all, but it at least stuck to the story and wasn't an excuse to do chain wrestling, which they very well could have and would have not made sense. Post match sees Hero and CC beat up Whitmer till Cabana saves the day leading to the next match.

PAS: This was a pretty fun brawl. I still am not a fan of Whitmer, he seems sometimes like a guy going through the motions especially when he works in "wrestling matches." He is a better brawler- as he will take a bump and land a shot. He did have a really great satin jacket with BW on it, which may be the only thing he has done in his career I can wholeheartedly endorse.

Bana vs Hero:

RN: This also started out heated. Bana can actually brawl and be funny at the same time. At the start of this...he punches Hero on this rather tall rampway they had built for this and screams SEEEE YAAAA...as he grabs Hero by the head and runs him off the ramp into a painful landing on the ring apron.

Again, this had a good bad guy, good guy vibe, as Bana goes over to the bell on a table...rings it himself to make things official, fans cheer and upon entering the ring...gets a kick to the head from Hero the bitch, knocking Colt to the floor in a heap.

Again not a MOTYC...but a fight, with hair pulling, Hero's bigtime right cross to Cabana's jaw, Hero standing on Bana's hands, and Hero being very arrogant with his offense inciting ire from

the fans. Hero has always done this backward roll into a twisting senton with might be the most arrogant move in wrestling and he now can pull it off as a bad guy.

I really liked the finish here, but many might not get the significance, as if you followed the Hero vs. ROH war, nearly everytime you had him hitting one of those pompous cravats out of nowhere to annoy the fans. Here he slaps on the cravate and Bana punches out of it as a Fuck You gesture and hits the Colt 45. I wish the fans would have given a match like this more heat as some of the other stuff on this show- as both played their roles great. This was much better the second time I watched it- as I missed the point skimming through it the first time.

PAS: I may have liked this the most out of all the undercard matches. Hero has really come into his own as a fuckwad heel. Here he just stomps on Cabana's hands and taunts the crowd. Simple stuff with anger and hate, no wasted motion. This was the first match not to get the "This is Awesome" chant, and they really needed a match not to work towards that chant.

SUWA and Go vs Doug Williams and Jody Fleisch:

RN: This was a huge disappointment to me and I thought a step above Brookside and Collyer as the match I liked the least on the show. But this at least had SUWA to save it and Go and Williams doing a great closing portion of the match around the "Chaos Theory". Fleisch has long been a favorite of mine since his career performance in the Curry Max six man in 1999...but wow, it ain't 99 no more. Fleisch I thought looked ok in recent Z1 matches, but I really thought he looked like shit here. He and SUWA messed up two moves pretty bad, not sure who's fault it is...but I'll just say Fleisch for consistency sake.

SUWA..again was fun as usual. Let's count the dickish tactics...

1. SUWA ending a collar and elbow tie up with Jody by doing the One arm trapped behind ropes, two arms trapped behind ropes...fakeout strike and SMACK to the forehead taunt as if to say "Fuck you, Stickboy"....
2. Suwa trapping Jody's ankle, getting a reverse seated toehold and cranking the rail thin ankle of Jody's with intent to break as he grabs the rope.
3. The double foot eyerake to Jody's face.
4. A barreling off the ropes shoulder tackled knocking Fleisch down and subsequent snot blow all over Fleisch.
5. SUWA hitting an elbowdrop off the second ropes to Fleisch balls.

Seriously, though the match was a mess, in my opinion- if you do like seeing SUWA simply maim UK flippy guys, this should definitely entertain you. Doug Williams may have been the worst wrestler on the entire show. Including Fleisch. God, he sucked I thought. And I've seen him in incredible matches from time to time, but he just seemed very lethargic and bloated up. Like Donovan Morgan after 2003. Just seemed like he didn't care. He and Go pulled off the finish well, but I didn't think he had a good match at all here.

PAS: Yeah this kind of blew at no point did anyone seem to be on the same page. SUWA was a lot of fun, but you could watch him do the same shtick in an undercard NOAH match, and you might also get to see Ricky Marvin or a nice Honda deadlift German. Jody Fliesh may have

seen wrestling pass him by. There are guys doing crazier spots, and he doesn't seem to do much else particularly well. The only chant I liked all night was "Let's Go Go"

Robbie Brookside vs Chad Collyer:

RN: Brookside is beloved for his WCW Worldwide stuff and he and Regal and Taylor are pals and he is said by Brian Danielson to be a wrestling god, but this match just didn't suit him. I like Chad Collyer well enough, but this match just seemed extremely boring to me. Robbie seemed to have a good deal of fans at the show, but heat for this match still was down. Brookside has a great ability to chain holds together and everything he does seems to be effective, but this match didn't really click with me. My favorite part was Brookside punching out of Collyer's Cloverleaf attempt. Didn't care for Brookside's finish, which apparently predated CIMA doing the same move (forget what he calls it). Some might like this, I just couldn't get into it. Too many uppercuts on this show. Brookside, Nigel, Collyer, CC, AmDrag....For what it is worth I thought Claudio's looked the best and Nigel's running uppercut to the corner is brutal and hurty looking.

PAS: I liked it more then Rob did, but Robbie Brookside does things very well. I would have liked to see him mix it up with some guys he doesn't have a standard match with. American Dragon always said his best match was against Brookside, and I would have liked to see what those two would have done with each other. Or maybe a Brookside v. Nigel match. I don't really see a reason to bring back Collyer and run this as a heat killer.

Austin Aries/Roderick Strong vs Briscoe Brothers:

PAS: I hadn't seen much recent Briscoes in the ring, although the greatness of their redneck promos had got me rooting for them to rule. It is really hard to pull off one of these pedal to the floor workrate tag matches, It is really easy to go too long, easy to hit too many moves early so the finishes don't mean anything, easy to hit too many big spots for meaningless kick outs. I think 95% of these matches fail, I didn't like the Dragon Gate six-man, don't care for most KENTA/Marifuji tags, I don't like this kind of stuff.

With all that preface, this match was spectacular. One of the few times that it just worked. All four guys were completely on point. My favorite thing about this was the brutality. I mean every shot was tight and nasty, Aries hits his springboard back elbow in the corner, and just pops Mark Briscoe right in the eye. Jay nearly breaks Aries nose with a high knee, Strong just blisters people with chops. The beating they lay on Aries when he is the face in peril was great, everything was done with such force, the spot where Jay springs off of Aries back to knock Strong off the apron was a great tag spot. When Strong finally gets the tag, Aries just lies down in the corner sucking air, it is little stuff like that which makes a match. You had a big hot run at the end, which really never had the point where I throw my hands in the air- which most of these matches have. I do think Strong came back a bit quickly from spike Jay Driller and the Doomsday Device, but it wasn't egregious. If this is your cup of tea, you will absolutely shit yourself over this match, even if it isn't I still think you should check it out.

RN:Upon two viewings, THIS was actually my favorite match on the show. And I consider the main event the best singles match ROH had till 9/16...so that's how much I loved this tag.

Phil noted the execution of everyone involved here and I agree 100 percent. I swear to god the Briscoes in the last 4 months may be my favorite team since Rick and Scotty Steiner in 1990. Lots of similarities. A sick series of moves and double teams. The ability to take sick bumps themselves. Mush mouth promos. And an ability to just totally tear the house down with a variety of different style of teams.

At this point, the Briscoes remind me of a combination of Konga the Barbarian and Muta in 89 for SNAP and added speed and emphasis on moves. Jay does a sprint into a running elbow that literally looks like it kills whomever is taking it. Great recoil on the dropkick too.

They have an arrogant country boy aura now. In this match, whether planned or not...Jay was chewing gum and not once...but twice he hit a great offensive move, the gum flew out of his mouth to the mat...and being the redneck cocky athlete he is...he RETRIEVES it quickly and HOLDS it up for a millisecond as if posing to fans and puts it back in his mouth. So sick, but at the same time, I remember that spot more than a lot of the insanely cool moves in this match. Just that added attitude to the athleticism helps them.

Briscoes in this, as if they practiced in drills like the old football days...when one would hit an offensive move... he'd ROLL quickly to his corner to get more speed to make the tag quicker. I love that on hot tags, but it makes way more sense to constantly try to have that urgency to get a quick tag.

Not to say Aries and Strong weren't great here. The pace this match had finally worked. These teams had two other matches and they both just didn't click. Here, it all worked. Every kick made a sick noise and got a big response. The hottags were more heated. The finish was out of this world. It all just worked.

Like I said, the Briscoes have always been physically gifted athletes, but NOW, they have a ton of little added basics and strategies and it really helps the matches mean more.

Strong had a killer hot tag and at the close of this, was just out on his feet. I loved the way the Aries and Strong teased the Dropkick/Ligerbomb combo and had it blocked only to hit it later. I also loved the way the Briscoes tried the Doomsday Device once too often and it was turned into a reverse rana which Aries tore his shoulder on leading to the win.

Seriously, just a great match. I also loved Briscoes vs. Davey/Sydal from night two, but that one had a few more flaws that I'm sure some would point out. But this match was as good as tag team wrestling gets these days. I now want to see the Briscoes against every team possible. Cide/Joe again, I want to see the KENTA/Fuji match now, I'd love an Evans/CIMA match next year or maybe if Gibson gets released Gibson/Strong. And don't get me started on how great London/Kendrick vs. Briscoes could be if one or the other moved. This was one of those matches where- after it- you just have a way larger sense of respect and fandom for everyone involved.

Nigel vs AD:

RN: Nigel McGuinness is the best wrestler in the states not wrestling for WWF. Including Danielson. And of late, even Joe. He's been just awesome from around March onward. I'm not sure whether it was his NOAH tour or whether when he last got a look by WWF if they told him to wrestle more of a big man style and ditch the Euro stuff or what, but he's just been great. I've never seen a combination of booking and a wrestler get a countout over more. In Philly vs

Strong the pop when Strong made the 20 count was as if someone just did a crazy dive. The countout is conditioned in ROH.

Thus, it was used perfectly in the PEAK portion of this match. They did the ropebreak deal and Nigel lost all his...allowing AD to put the crossface chickenwing on him with the leverage of the ropes. But Nigel, the crowd favorite, persevered and fought it off. Prior to going outside the ring toward the finish, Nigel hit a TOWER OF LONDON and a sick lariat while AD was crotched in the ropes for two huge nearfalls.

Then eventually Danielson did the infamous posting of Nigel where he was hardway'd by having his head/skull smashed off the post and he falls into the crowds. Danielson drives him back further with the dive. Looks like AD will win with a countout. From count 16 onward, the place just exploded in cheers wanting Nigel to make it back in. When he did, it was magic. Huge reaction and Nigel smartly went with it and HULK'd up to a degree with blood pouring out of his head and they banged heads as if Nigel was saying "You'll have to kill me motherfucker". Just awesome stuff.

The best part of the match and one of the lasting visuals of all wrestling this year was Nigel hitting the nastiest rebound/ropes lariat. He normally just bounds up off the ropes to hit it...but here, the blood loss caused him to not have strength, so you see a guy slowly reach the ropes...clumsily bound off them and BOOM. The fucking lariat heard round the world. I'm a huge mark for a sick lariat and fuck this was among the sickest. We are talking Sasaki and Steiner, Hansen and Jesse Barr shit. The sound was just sick as it hit and Nigel screamed while bounding off ropes before connecting. He reaches over...one ... two....and AD snatches him and hooks him in the submission. I'm not as high on Dragon as most, but Christ, gotta say, few have as over a series of finishes as he does at this stage and the heat and cheering, especially with a very effective good guy just is off the charts. This ended with a violent, violent flurry of elbows and AD wins. A finish as strong as this always puts a match on another level. This may not have been perfect from bell to bell, but the finish alone I think really sets it apart from most of the best matches this year. Extremely dramatic and memorable.

PAS: This match reminded me a lot of Austin Aries v. Samoa Joe when Joe dropped the title. In the sense that the body of the match was nothing exceptional, but it built to an absolutely brilliant finish. The stuff pre the floor, felt a little perfunctory. They went through the rope breaks and it felt a little like killing time, it was fine, but I think the early work was better in their first match. Everything after they go to the floor is amazing. Nigel is certifiable for letting his head get mauled like that, but it lead to an amazing visual, and incredible heat for the finish. Rob was spot on with the description of that lariat, it was such a great variation of a signature spot, and was one of the better near falls in company history. Danielson is such a killer, and the Gary Goodrich elbows have never looked this good. I really think after this match that Nigel could carry the promotion as champ, and that is something I wouldn't have thought before this.

RN: This DVD was great as it opened with a great Nigel promo talking about his big chance, they had a great pre match video with not a bunch of clouds and Henry Ford...but of AD using all of his submissions in clips, showing ALL the people he's beaten from Romero to Storm to Strong to Aries to Yang to Delirious, to AJ to Daniels and so on. And then they showed Nigel had

beaten him by countout once in the same video. Thus, doing what it needed to, giving the viewer the hope that Nigel could win it all.

Fantastic match and the last two matches on this show were just great stuff. It will be interesting to see if the NYC dvd from 9/16 eclipses this.

PAS: This was a great show, really one of the best shows the promotion has ever run, and that was without their two biggest star. Nothing was terrible and the two main event matches were as good as anything this entire year.

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STOP the MATSUNAGA! DVDVR Roundtable Discussion:

SIGN-IN-

DR: DEAN RASMUSSEN.

RM: Raven Mack

ZERO1-MAX- 6/30/2005- OSAMU NAMIGUCHI vs MITSUHIRO MATSUNAGA :

DR: Melancholy and sullen Lenny wrote the set-up to this on the beloved DVDVR matches board when he posted all this and I QUOTE: "The story started out with Katsuhiko Ogasawara seeing Ryouji Sai's photo in a fashion magazine modeling clothes and he think this a disgrace for a shoot fighter. So he brings his Karate Forces (Kazuhiko Ogasawara, Kazuhiko Matsuzaki and Masashi Aoyagi) to ZERO1-MAX to fight Young MAX (basically all the youngsters guys in ZERO1) but the Karate Forces kept losing against the pro wrestlers.

On the 6/17 show the Karate Forces brought with them a new member dressed in a black gi and wearing a mask. At the end of the match against Young MAX he unmasked as Matsunaga (Matsunaga had a karate gimmick when he first started wrestling)."

I don't know about you but Ogasawara calling Young MAX a bunch of fags and wanting to kick all their asses is the most awesomely redneck angle I think I have ever heard of. If only the Karate fighters were Young MAX's old drunken uncles could you POSSIBLY make that more redneck. Here, Namiguchi represents the nephew that didn't come home for Christmas because he goes to art school now and he wanted to go to New Orleans instead and protest testing on animals at Tulane University. Namiguchi's mom cried at the family dinner and Ogasawara gets pissed off because his sister is crying. Matsunaga represents Uncle Benny- the Nam vet and drywall subcontractor. Benny says, "Oh fuck that little bastard. I'm driving down there and straightening this shit out." The Z-1 official who gets carved up represents the NOLA policeman who Benny kicks the fuck out of. Namiguchi is a fucking KING in this by leaning facefirst into bloodening.

RM: I have probably seen far more Matsunaga matches in my limited viewing than Zero1 matches. In fact, don't know that I've ever seen them in action, but what's not to love about Mr. Danger? The guy is a legend. You have so many death match workers over the years in garbage American promotions, and so many of them are just blood for blood's sake, lacking the

unteachable or bladeable charisma that just comes from Mr. Danger. (This is also why Necro Butcher stood out so much, because he just had something extra about him that made you not yawn and think, "God, another fuckwad getting ten light tubes stapled to his back for a powerbomb through a cactus plant into a swimming pool full of rubbing alcohol.") Namiguchi is young and spry and ripe for the bludgeoning.

ZERO1-MAX- 8/23/05- RIKIYA FUDO vs MITSUHIRO MATSUNAGA:

RM: Mr. Danger is continue to run the danger through Zero1, come out David Carradine look to Flash Gordon soundtrack. He is danger simple man scar multiplied ultimate, versus beauty youth athlete impeccable. How will time fade do justice or not so? Sometimes it's fun to write like babelfish translations.

DR: Matsunaga coming out to "Flash!" by Queen is telling. Whereas as lesser puroresu wrestlers come out to FAUX Queen, KING OF DANGER is the real thing. FUUUDDDOOOOO! shows that he can brawl like a motherfucker before getting ripped up and mauled by the old crazy psycho. Fudo is a complete cock with the dropkick to the face and the gnarly piledriver. Matsunaga going all Great Muta with the in-gimmick no-selling is offset by the de-pretty-ing of the young pretty boy. Matsunaga making them MEN by uglying them up is such fucking great subtext to the reasons behind the whole fued. The whole making of the young man his bitch by doing the redneck thing of making her unattractive to anyone else is fucking SOLID GOLD. Fudo looks really great once his fighting spirit kicks in and shit. The fighting spirit carries the match- the FUCKING FIREBALL by Matsunaga is fucking OLD SCHOOL SHEIK LEVEL FUCKING GREAT. WHAT THE FUCK?!? Carving up the guy who rings the bell is sooooo COBO ARENA 1974. Fucking beautiful.

RM: Powerbomb onto chairs, pinfall attempt by handsome youngster, only to get blasted by fire in his face, and of course pinned by Mr. Danger. You'd think someone would be able to roll out of a pinfall attempt after the ol' fire in the eyes thing, as you'd want to be rolling around anyways. Matsunaga continues the beatdown, and help comes, but there is more flash paper at hand, so more eyes burn with the hatred a bitter old scarred fuck feels towards wrestling's more palatable for the public pretty boys. Then he bloodies up the physics teacher-bespectacled timekeeper guy with his fork. He finally gets run off, but stabs a couple of other old ladies and rapes an affluent Japanese baby on the way to the back. It is the greatest. I bet he never writes a stupid children's book.

ZERO1-MAX- 9/19/05- KOHEI SATO vs MISUHIRO MATSUNAGA:

DR: The barbed-wire c-clamp is so simple yet so AWESOME. Sato is the hipster pretty boy that gets to follow Johnny Cash saying, "And I came to behold a pale horse and the name that sat upon him was DEATH...." there should be a wider use of the Book Of Revelations in The Professional Wrestling and I back the use of scripture as precursor to fireball one hundred percent. Matsunaga's DANGEROUS BLEED coat is... I am at a loss to describe the greatness. Sato sinks in the Jujigatame! Matsunaga stabs him in the bottom of the foot! That's wrestling

psychology, folks. Emo Boy gets blood all over his hipster back tattoo. Sato blades like an absolute motherfucker and kicks his way back into your heart. It's at this point that you notice that Matsunaga has fangs. It's at this point that Matsunaga starts digging a large hole in Sato's tricept. It's at this point that Matsunaga tries to kill everyone in the ring. It's at this point that I totally fell in love with wrestling all over again.

(On a side note: Kohei Sato has the greatest sounding voice in professional wrestling. I assume that he sings for an ENTOMBED cover band when he has a few days off.)

RM: The Stop the Matsunaga movement is now in full-force, is creepy Japanese cinematographic fashion, with Johnny Cash music and for-pretend-hot-jap sluts reporting, and Matsunaga in mask to freak out the masses. Why does fake hot scrawny jap slut have so many toys on the Ikea shelves behind her? Internet people love Japanese chicks because internet people love to make fun of people to make up for their own social shortcomings in life and they want to feel like big man big dick and most full-grown sexy Japanese women are physically built like a full-grown cute 12-year-old American girl just now getting grass on the field to play ball upon, so I fear Jap love on internet is secret pedophilia. BUT WHO THE FUCK CARES!?!? Matsunaga is going to stab some Jap dude who has blonde hair and a raspy voice with a taped fork, and Johnny Cash says "behold a pale horse" and I think of the great combination of William Cooper and Mr. Danger. I love Matsunaga because this is not just some awesome shit he was convinced to do; he is a maniac and would stab you or me for not even a third of a paycheck, yet he has the sense to indulge this psychological perversion through the simulated world of the professional wrestling. He ends up carving hardcore hieroglyphics into young dude's arm with a fork, gets disqualified for not following the pussy rules of puroresu classic, and murders his way back to the locker room, where I bet he listened to something mellow, calmed down, and went home, giving his wife a big kiss on the forehead as he snuck under the covers next to her since it was late. Mrs. Danger has to be up early, you know.

ZERO1-MAX- 9/29/05- KATSUHIKO OGASAWARA vs MITSUHIRO MATSUNAGA:

DR: This is a No-Rope Karate Match. This is basically Ogasawara saying through the medium of the Professional Wrestling, "MY GOD! WHAT HAVE DONE!?!?!" He feels he must finish this and rid the world of what he has created but he must do it with KARATE!- an odd twist that throws off the redneckness of the feud. Ogasawara doesn't NEARLY bring the hate to the match. Matsunaga OPTS to use barbed wire around his ankle and to carve up the summoner with a screwdriver- thus taking Matsunaga full circle. He has forsaken the young proponents wrestling and now he completely forsakes his old cohorts who champion karate. There is only the DEATH MATCH. This is where they should have Merle Haggard say, "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You can't serve both God and Mammon." Ogasawara redeems his crappy striking by blowing a fucking 55 gallon barrel of blood out of his head.

RM: I love the end after the match where Ogasawara holds his blood into his head with his hand while maintaining enough presence of mind to give the crowd ceremonial karate man daps.

ZERO1-MAX- 10/9/05- No-rope barbwire deathmatch- HIROTAKA YOKOI vs MITSUHIRO MATSUNAGA:

RM: Okay, by now, the pre-match recaps with grainy footage and police line tape have got me so motherfuckin' hyped for more carnage, and ultimately resolution... hopefully. I mean, it has to end somewhere doesn't it? Or will this just keep on and on until finally Matsunaga rapes Jumbo's corpse while reaching out to stab the living puro legends attempting to remove him from the unearthed grave? Either way, we all win. In that sense, wrestling is a lot like scratch-off lottery tickets, with the same fixed outcomes, and all too often, with modern writing teams and shit, you don't uncover enough winning situations to keep you happily coming back. This motherfuckin' Matsunaga storyline is a \$1500 scratch-off win the day before your power is about to get cut off and you're not sure if there's enough limit still left on the credit card hovering near impending doom to make the payment in time.

Barbed wire rope match entrance to "Exodus" with the ring looking like a Nervous Records slipmat for a tattooed greaser Jap kid to get bludgeoned by the aging Mr. Danger, holding maniacally onto his hardcore legend status – probably the only thing worth noting he's made out of his life – it is a trophy example of the sad perfect beauty of the professional wrestling, and what made me fall in love with it when The Iron Sheik was clubbing Blackjack Mulligan with those weird ay-rab bowling pins, or when Jimmy Valiant was losing his hair, literally, over that piece of shit bald-headed geek Paul Jones, back when I was young. I am momentarily in love again, ready to move in with wrestling and share a bed and carefully work its clit with my tongue even when the moon cycle is spinning at peak flow.

DR: Now that Matsunaga is broken with the past and broken with the future, I would assume that all that is left is nihilistic destruction. With Yokoi thrown in for local (red) color. Matsunaga appears when his music starts. He has a chain and his fangs are longer. Yokoi starts off like Sato with a Jujigatame but Matsunaga gnaws on his calf and escapes. Lowblow and a screwdriver later and we get to gauge Yokoi's blading ability. VERDICT: FULL HONMA LEVEL. Yokoi dons the barbed-wire glove and Yokoi beats the fuck out of Matsunaga. Matsunaga gets the RIBBON OF BLOOD to flow right over his eye. Matsunaga drives a fork into Yokoi's hand and this is sooo fucking sick. Sometimes art has to be disturbing. Even more disturbing is Yokoi's hand being crimped by Matsunaga's pliers. It's at this point where they actually utilize the forgotten barbed wire that has taken the place of the ropes. Matsunaga chokes him out over the ringpost with a chain and the Z-1 MAX roster goes insane chasing Matsunaga off and yelling threats at him.

ZERO1-MAX - 11/17/05- YOSHIHITO SASAKI vs MITSUHIRO MATSUNAGA:

DR: God, Sasaki looks like he is TWELVE. He looks scared when he gets up from avoiding the barbed-wire so this is a pretty great set-up- innocence versus the cracked and broken spirit/ youth versus age/ fighting for Zero-1 MAX versus trying to destroy whatever you can get your hands on- all played out against a field of blood and barbed-wire. Matsunaga is always high concept. He is the highest concept when he uses death matches to explore religion. here he intermingles religious overtones with the idea of blood and loyalty. Luckily, it's mostly blood because Sasaki blades like a Puerto Rican in this. Matsunaga takes the biggest bumps into the barbed-wire and he balances it out by ripping at Sasaki's forehead and EAR with channel locks.

Sasaki takes the powerbomb from the ring into the Spidernetting on the floor but fights back to German suplex Matsunaga- who pulls out a spike and ends up destroying himself by missing and stabbing himself in the stomach, allowing Sasaki to hit an Emerald Frozien through a box of barbed-wire set up in the ring. God, that was like the Brothers Grimm were booking it. MILLION BILLION STARS.

RM: Your innocence vs. cracked and broken spirit and religious analogies make sense, but I saw this far more darkly. Young Sasaki looked up from avoiding the barbed wire with the look of a bewildered child about to be molested for the first time in a handicapped bathroom stall, and appropriately enough Mr. Danger digs into his ankle Jobox for the first time this evening. Liquor-graveled voice says, "I'm gonna stab you with this gutter spike, boy," and sweet-voiced youngster not yet jaded to the world's off-kilter ways of spinning answers, "I will fight it." "HAHAHA, fight all you want, boy," and they struggled and sweet eyes look around in horrid realization that just by fighting, he is being overpowered back into the barbed wire. There is no escaping fate, and no escaping the damage that was bound to be incurred. And Sasaki's battle with this demon nightmare continues, and by the time you get to the point where Sasaki is dropped off the apron into barbed wire netting, he doesn't even sell it, just sort of sitting up in a bloody daze waiting for someone to help him out of this mess. The molestation has occurred though, and he has lost sense of his place in these surroundings and will never get out of this mess. Welcome to the world of nightmare demons. Sure, Sasaki escapes the clutches and flips Matsunaga into a gnarly gimmick for the pinfall finale, but does one really win when they simply gain a small measure of revenge against the dark force that has changed the way sun shines in the morning for the "victor"? And the demon nightmare stalks off in a daze into the fringe darkness of the bowels of our modern infrastructure, where more victims await, unaware.

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THE FINALS OF THE 2006 NEW JAPAN PRO WRESTLING G-1 CLIMAX

Satoshi Kojima vs Hiroyoshi Tenzan- NEW JAPAN PRO WRESTLING- G1 Climax-8/13/2006: I put this off as long as I could. HOLY SHIT. This is fucking FIFTY-ONE MINUTES LONG? Ah FUCK! Oh well. Luckily, I hate both of these choads. Luckily, this looks to go on for a while. Heck, maybe this will rule. Heck, maybe I'll fuck Lonnie Anderson. ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN. It's at this point where I PRAY that my wife will surprise me with a 12 pack of anything when she gets back from Wal-Mart. Hell, I haven't always hated Tenzan and Kojima. Hell, I've had extended periods of my wrestling fandom where I actively looked forward to them wrestling. Giant Bernard is at ring-side- maybe his presence will ward off the suck. They do some listless chinlocks early. My friend Bryan calls and we talk about the Celtic Frost show we're going to next thursday so I have one last stall before immersing myself in a match with two wrestlers I don't trust to deliver the goods. Tenzan with a hammer lock. My wife gets home in 30 minutes so I wonder if maybe I should hold off, just in case she bought some beer. Kojima puts on the

STF and Tenzan sells it like RVD in an STF in the first five minutes of a match. They stand up and beat on each other for a while and that's kinda fun. Tenzan does the Sid Eudy Memorial Shitty Chinlock and luckily Kojima goes back to chopping Tenzan so I don't pass out at 8:24 PM. Kojima starts really laying in the chops. Tenzan responds with a random elbow to the side of the head- all of which doesn't suck. Hell, it gets pretty good there before Kojima breaks the string by hitting some godawful elbow drops. They fight in the corner for a Superplex and Tenzan finally hits it and Kojima no-sells it and NOW I can actively despise this match. SUCK! It sucks. SUCK. Luckily, there is only a half hour to go. Tenzan hits the shittiest Calf Branding you ever saw. Aaaaand it's a EudyLock 2006. Tenzan headbutts the lariat elbow- which affects Kojima far more than a fucking SuperPlex. Tenzan sinks in a Fujiwara armbar and somehow it hurts Kojima. Kojima misses a piscado and Tenzan fights to suplex him to the floor BUT KOJIMA FIGHTS OUT OF IT AND REVERSES IT! And who gives a shit? Tenzan fights out of facebuster on the apron until he doesn't and he gets facebusted. Tenzan climbs into the ring and bumps huge to the floor after Kojima lariats him over the ropes. Maybe the awards ceremony is really long and maybe this turd will be over in like FIFTEEN more minutes. Kojima with a powerbomb and one of those truly shitty top rope elbows that he isn't afraid to do. Kojima throws some elbows. Tenzan does a Samoan Slam that Kojima no-sells. HE IS ROAD WARRIOR HAWK 2006!!! Tenzan hits a special magic side suplex that Kojima opts to sell. Tenzan hits a piledriver but we'll just have to wait and see if it's a Memphis piledriver or a Kojima REVIVING Piledriver. Tenzan hits a nice top rope diving chop to the throat to set up his Reverse Cobra Clutch submission- but Kojima hits the ropes. Kojima fights out of a powerbomb and then they completely fuck the spot up. Kojima hits a Stone Cold Stunner and I'm hoping the faster I type the faster this load of shit will be over. Kojima hits a top rope Frankensteiner but Tenzan hits a clothesline before Kojima can get his lariat in and I'm ashamed of Tenzan's fighting spirit because he didn't immediately jump and flex for the crowd as soon as he hit the ground from the Frankensteiner. Tenzan goes back to his Cobra Clutch- picking him up and slamming him into it. Kojima powers up into a Samoan Drop that Tenzan WANTS to no-sell. Kojima hits a lariat for two and Kojima wants a 10 count on it. Kojima makes it to his feet and LARIAT NUMBER TWO!!! for TWOOO!! Tenzan avoids the third lariat and chops on the lariat arm and hits a moonsault for two. And he hits ANOTHER moonsault for ONE! SEMI-REVIVING MOONSAULT! Sweet Piledriver by Tenzan FOR THE WIN! YEAAAAAAAAA!!! It's not actually 51 minutes long! And the finish wasn't NEARLY as annoying as I supposed it was going to be. I was assuming that if I started counting the lariats that Tenzan kicked out of, it would equal and surpass the amount of ankle locks a Kurt Angle opponent would escape in one of his Hall Of Fame-level matches. Luckily, it never got even close to as annoying as your average Angle match. Hell, I only wanted to vomit directly on one of these guys. Tenzan is actually elevated by this match in my inner pantheon of shitty wrestlers I can tolerate. Kojima. Eh, he can go fuck himself if knew how to sell it. Perfectly reasonable wrestling tournament final by two guys who I can't stand usually.

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Lucha Libre on Galavision 05/13/2006 thru 06/3/2006

[RAVEN MACK]

Negro Casas/ El Hijo Del Santo vs Averno/ Mephisto - aired 05/13/2006: You gotta love the extended tag or singles luchas masks, as we start with mind-numbing armbar chessmatchmanship between Mephisto and Negro Casas. And I have a million times mentioned how Negro Casas looks to me like a creepy teenage girl molester, but he somehow manages to look even more so, having a pair of Asics logo tube socks pulled up to his knees. Mephisto holds upper hands, then it escalates to more stiffish violence, but that all gets squashed by dastardly rudo double teaming in the corner, and eventually Negro tastes the ringpost, to lead to the initial Santito segment, which is short-lived, as he is tossed quickly, with Casas coming in to taste powerbomb pinnings, and then Santito gets pretzeled out to make the first fall officially rudo.

Segunda caida ring girl has those puffy bunny rabbit tail things attached to both her hips. I do not understand this, and it confuses the attractiveness of her fleshy ass in shiny go-go shorts for me. They also have that caricature-drawing guy ringside explain his caricature in the most perfect Mexican accent a guy who draws comedic pictures of wrestlers could ever have, further confusing me. Super clipped quick second fall goes tecnico, featuring a tree of woe asics molester feet into Mephisto's face followed fluidly by a Santito top rope tope into the INESCAPABLE CAMEL CLUTCH! Seriously, if I had more money than sense, which I might anyways even with my limited finances, I'd waste a ton of money to book El Hijo Del Santo vs. Super Dragon with an extended build-up thing where The Iron Sheik was training Super Dragon in the camel clutch so that Super Dragon was like Diamond Dallas Page with his stupid diamond cutter, and then Super Dragon was catching dudes in camel clutches from irish whips or top rope cross bodyblocks and shit.

Third fall is great fun and keeps the horns blaring throughout. There's some great wacky right legwork by Casas on Mephisto. And what the fuck, if you are two evil masked guys with flames and shit on your outfits, don't one of you hold Santo while the other one comes running in to kick him in the chest, because in Mexico, God is real, and he doesn't let shit like that happen successfully, at least not in tercera caidas. This leads to Averno being left for the dreaded sleeperhold on the ground by Negro with belly exposed for the Santito senton into diving tope onto his partner, and then Casas roly-polys Averno, and it's over... or so I assum, but Averno gets his evil little satanic boots onto the ropes to stop the count. And Negro Casas reminds me for the hundredth time how much I love his ability to just put his boots right into someone's jaws, which I always end up forgetting by the next time I see him and just call him a creepy molester-looking luchador again. Such great shenanigans and tide changes in this fall, with multiple seemingly for-sure pins not being pins. Then we get the big double inevitable pin, with Santito and Casas in the upper position and the crowd goes crazy, but double kickouts. And then as they go for a second shot at it, rudos reverse it all, Averno with the camel clutch on Santito and Mephisto with that Negro roll-up on Casas, and the rudos not only win to retain their title, they win with the tecnicos trademark pin combo. Averno & Mephisto are so motherfuckin' great, and would make a much better mystical modern Midnight Express in America if they had a good mouthpiece to explain their evil to stupid Americans.

You know what doesn't confuse me at all about lucha on Galavision? Those great tecnologia televisa deportes things they do with the freeze frame that has lightning bolts pointing to where on El Hijo Del Santo the camel clutch is causing pain. That "technology" probably cost like \$100 to do and would look great with a diamond sweep cut away from it, but it's the greatest and most

scientific advance I've seen in wrestling television since Gordon Solie got too old or drunk to use big words from medical dictionaries.

Mini Chessman/ Jerrito Estrada/ Mini Abismo Negro vs Prince/ Octagoncito/ Mascarita Sagrada - aired 05/20/2006: Oh Christ, it's AAA, and not CMLL. At least it's minis, where teenage trainees, really short adults, and the truly genetically inclined towards midgetry and dwarfdom compete to the delight of everyone in attendance. Jerrito Estrada coming out to speed metal automatically makes him my #23 Active Wrestler in the World (part of my ever-evolving and always-changing list of the Top 100 Lb. for Lb. Motherfuckin' Active Wrestlers in the World, hidden by secret link somewhere on my blog). The fact that Prince is a mini based on the shitty musician who wears purple clothes Prince, it makes me sad that Antonio Pena died. No one dreamed up as much retarded shit as he did, having the strange visions of a glue-sniffer but with the motivation of an actual businessman.

I think what bothers me here is the mixed signals, or else I should hate Mexicans. Estrada and Mini Chessman are obvious metalheads, wearing only black and red pleather and coming out to metallic themes, but they are rudos. The tecnico team has a fuckin' mini-Prince on their team. Do the people actually support this? Or is this another attempt by Pena to force his homoerotic vision of society onto the simple Mexican masses?

HEY! LOOK AT THAT! MINI-ABISMO NEGRO WANTS TO SHAKE OCTAGONCITO'S HAND! I haven't watched AAA in three years, but I've seen him do that and kick Little 8-Sided Figure in the little gut a thousand times... oh wait, it was reverse tricknology. He didn't kick him. Still, that was a waste of four minutes. I'm sure stupid AAA can waste my time much less predictably than that though. Jerrito Estrada and the little Prince are matched up, in their naturally combative roles. Prince does some fancy lad dancing bullshit and Jerrito Estrada smacks him down, but then tossed out the ring. YES! The pay-off to Mini Abismo Negro actually shaking hands comes quick, as he enters the ring, offers to shake Prince's hand, who accepts, and gets kneed in the nuts immediately in a move like you'd see in high school cafeterias. This is AAA, and it will only get worse, so I'm going to pretend that was the end of the match.

Zumbido vs El Hijo Del Fantasma - aired 05/20/2006: The Phantasm family sports nice masks. Zumbido has nice bad tattoos and a blonde mohawk of pure Mexican wrestler proportions. They would make either a nice indy flick or Mr. Show sketch as a team. Instead, they are combatants, probably because of Vincente Fox's bullshit. The elder Fantasma lurks ringside as a second, looking like Stephen Percy on a West Hollywood masquerade swinger's party date. Zumbido almost blows a couple of things, and totally blows one or two. I guess blowing things comes with being in AAA. Awesome, they even give me a slow motion replay of how great Zumbido almost blowing a spot is right before the commercial break. I just think to myself how bad this match is, then Zumbido Mexican whips Phantasm Jr. into the ropes and he does the head stand into the ropes rebound thing, but sort of just ends up falling backward as Zumbido errantly barely touches him with a dropkick as he falls. TRIPLE A FEVER – CATCH IT! I think the cure for this internal ache is a healthy dose of the fast forward button.

Pimpinela Escarlata, Electroshock, & T.D. vs. Cassandro, Chessman, & Charly Manson - aired 05/20/06

Okay, Cassandra is a transvestite who intrigues Pimpinela, and T.D. is a generic masked person with Televisa Deportes logos on his mask and chest, probably in order to lure the channel away from CMLL. Regardless, this is the most fucked up shit to see, with Cassandra coming out to the Super Porky theme song and doing the same dances, but in much less masculine ways. Pimpinela and Cassandra start out, looking like muscular versions of housewives who would watch *The Price is Right* for 17 years of their life, almost religiously, but also wearing skimpy sequined outfits, and I suddenly support any politico fuckwads who want to build a giant fence between me and Mexico, because there are pictures of people sitting with their kids watching this. I don't want one of those regular fences like you see on the TV news segments, but one of those awesome concrete walls with glass shards embedded pointing upwards like you see on those other TV news segments about how even though we have like half our population in jail, Chinese jails are more fucked up than our prisoners could even imagine with two dicks in their ass at once. Oddly enough, I bet Cassandra, Pimpenela, and Antonio Pena – rest in peace – could simulate such a maneuver. But even oddly enough, I quite enjoy – not sexually, no homo – the Pimpy/Cassandra test of strength into multiple two-count pin attempts into really weird over-the-top homo-erotic bridge out of final pin attempt of the segment. Pimpinela acts like the karate kid, then climbs the ropes in a terrible looking walk-the-ropes start-up, but then gets knocked off by Charly Manson and everybody enters the ring, ruining the beauty of this Joel Gertner dream match. And Pimpy is the worst transvestite seller of punches to the forehead I've ever seen since maybe Jimmy Garvin's second Sunshine or at least Baby Doll for sure. Pimpinela is even bleeding, but still the worst seller of opposing offense ever. And the other four wrasslers pretty much are having a match exclusive of the two transvestites, which is sad. Is this not 2006? I'm not gonna watch the rest of this Reverend Fred Phelps bullshit? My grandfather fought in both World War II and the Korean War and brought home pictures of one of them cities that got bombed and he drunk himself to death before I was born, and if he did all that for anything at all, he did it for the freedom of two creepy dudes dressed like women to be able to get beaten up by regular dudes as well as other creepy dudes dressed like women. I know Mexico wasn't a part of the United States back then, but fuck, let's be serious, it's basically a part of America now, one that gives us cheap labor both here and there so that we can afford to have all the dumb shit we like to have, like three-packs of cotton boxer shorts as well as well-maintained median strips on our highways.

Cibernetico vs Abismo Negro - aired 05/27/2006: This is in a cage, so I am tricked into thinking it is worth slowing down for. Cibernetico comes out to fake "Search & Destroy" and Abismo Negro wears puke green outfit. Apparently the Black Family aims to be more than just a shitty La Familia de Tijuana and they're not a shitty N.W.O. and have like nine dudes in the cage beating up on Abismo Negro, whose puke green gear must be symbolic of how he's sick of the rudo ways in AAA, and fake La Parka comes out to help but then seven more Black Family dudes come in the cage, so then fake Psychosis comes out, climbs to the top of the cage, waits there for like three minutes for fake evil N.W.O. to see him, then they look at him and he climbs back down, so then one gay cowboy pretending to be down with the Black Family comes out and tears off his shirt and all the rudos climb out the cage at once, which means Cibernetico wins. Does this mean Abismo Negro loses his mask? Of course not. Antonio Pena's death should be making heads hang low in respect because when the rest of the world thought, "Yo,

there's no way you can make lucha more retarded than it already is," Antonio Pena said, "Not only can I make it more retarded, I can make it TEN TIMES MORE RETARDED!" And he did, God Bless his perverted little no-longer-alive soul.

Mini Abismo Negro/ Tiffany/ El Apache vs Mascarita Sagrada/ Martha Villalobos/ Billy Boy – aired on 06/03/06: Even by the clusterfuck-ability of the lucha trios match concept, this is quite the stellar retardation of a line-up, but I will watch it because of Apache. Tiffany is beating up Billy Boy and Apache is laying a couple licks into Martha Villalobos fat face. And I don't pay attention and when I look back, Mini Abismo Negro is just barely shorter than Billy Boy and choking him and Tiffany is beating up poor little Mascarita Sagrada. I love Tiffany, even if her pooch gut is fairly obvious through her feminine Elvis jumpsuit. Her slamming midgets on their face only increases these feelings.

Actually, this is horrible. I love how wrestling promotions that really suck use a six-sided ring so that they can suck in two extra directions. Apache is tethered down in this match by doing segments with Villalobos, and even Tiffany's tits lose their luster when I realize she has the ass of a 10-year-old boy. Although, near the end of this week's episode, I do rather enjoy fake La Parka visiting some dying girl who has a tracheotomy and is cuddling under one of those fuzzy tiger stripe blankets in the hospital, and he gives her a mask while soft music plays. I'm sure if she could talk through the tube stuffed into her throat, she'd thank him for the green-trimmed mask so that she can scare Jesus with it when she goes to Heaven.

Cibernetico vs Shocker vs Vampiro – aired on 06/03/2006: Sure stupid AAA, a three-way bull terrier (that's Spanish for dog collar) match WILL trick me into watching you a little closer for a few minutes. When it comes to having your facial expression not change even once during the course of a match, Vampiro is top-notch. What the fuck? Cibernetico and Shocker are just teaming up on Vamp, and Cibernetico is gonna chain whip him – standard dog collar match fare – but they lay a chair across Vampiro to whip the chair. That is easily the stupidest shit I've ever seen to pretend like it hurts somebody in the fake fighting. Even a sleeperhold makes more extreme sense, because it's mysterious and medical. Swinging a chain into a chair laying on top of a guy is stupid. Fuck this. Although I do wish I understood more about how Cibernetico is leader of some sort of religious sect that worships cybernetics, and how this made him such a sexy unmasked man.

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3 MATCHES FROM NEW JAPAN'S LOCK-UP- 5/21/2006
[DEAN RASMUSSEN]

I blame myself. The grand total of matches I need to watch is now hovering at the 225 mark and here I am scoffing at the 9/9 NOAH title change and the straight off the presses New Japan show from last week that hit the internet and EN LIEU opt to concentrate on the...yes...

LOCK-UP. Either way, we thank young Kevin for eternally sidetracking the main mission by posting the cool quirky stuff.

YOSHITSUNE vs RASSE: Rasse has a basic Super Delfin knock-off of a mask- except with inexplicable giant black eyebrows. Yoshitsune has the mask with a guys face on it so it's exceedingly creepy and great- like a burn-victim from a horrible bobbing-for-apples accident. Yo has these kinky black rubber gloves and I so don't want see the hard-drive of the guy who designed this outfit. They flop around a bit in feigned matwork and I'm too distracted by the whole New Realm Of S&M that Yoshitsune is bringing to pay much attention- until they do these really elaborate and BEAUTIFULLY FRUITILY EMBELLISHED armdrags and I party and freak out. Yoshitsune hits a sweet swingboard elbow drop and I'm completely digging him. They trade chops and Rasse stomps to TRANSITION~! and begins spindling Yo's knee and it kills a lot of time in the middle before they go into the final flurry of Lucharesu- following the time-honored tradition of New Japan Juniors doing pointless matwork before kicking out of a couple dozen finishers. And on cue, Yo hits a batch of mortals and quebradas and a swanky REVERSE Flying Space Tiger Drop immediately upon escaping the knee torchah. He remembers to limp a little after flying full speed into the corner to hit a flying crescent savat backheel crescent kick and I chuckle at the SUBTEXT. RASSE goes on offense and hits a buncha low grade power moves to set up a failed PHOENIX SPLASH! Yo spins and kicks and the two-counts start coming. A superkick with MOR-TAL and REALLY fucking beautiful Shooting Star Press and Yoshitsune is your winner. That's... uh... spectacular highflying here on the New Japan syndicated network- quite the Blitzkrieg vs Damien 666 WCW Pro match. Full Worldwide point.

DIASUKE SEKIMOTO vs TAKASHI UWANO: Schneider hates Sekimoto because he has freaky bug eyes. I like him because he'll punch you right in the face and you can punch him right in the face. If he can carry the Poor Man's Kishin Kawabata that we call Uwano, even angry youth Schneider will have to say that Sekimoto is a fine fine wrestler. THE STAGE IS SET! ROLL THE INTERNET VIDEO VEIWINING MACHINE! They do some of the working of the arm. Uwano does a nice drop toehold and works the knee and chain wrestles to the headlock and Uwano IS Eddy Jackie. Uwano beats on Sekimoto and Sekimoto gets fired up and starts firing back. They kick each other really hard for a minute and then they kinda do some stuff and my mind starts to wander. Sekimoto doesn't beat on Uwano like Uwano is the Lorenzo of Lock-Up so I can't really muster interest. I'm sorry, dear gentle and beloved reader. Around the 7 minute mark, Sekimoto kinda goes into Nise Masato Tanaka offensive mode and my love is gone. Sekimoto minus Mammoth Sasaki is like Tanahashi minus Giant Bernard- directionless, psychologically QUESTIONABLE, inferior and exposed. God, this match kinda made me like Uwano a little more. The finish is a fucking wreck.

YUJIRO vs DIASUKA SHIMODA: Yujiro means that one is allowed to hope for a complete assbeating. Or a wad of crap. I'm trying to place Shimoda but all I can think of Mima Shimoda in a sweater in that one Ozaki/KAORU match and, well, I'll stop there. This Shimoda looks like I cut his hair. LUCKILY, they opted to beat the living dogpiss out of each other and I am suitably stoked as this gets cranked up. Shimoda has really fabulous clubbing forearms and I would be A LIAR if I said that didn't mean anything to me. Yujiro actually sells the kneebar in a BattlARTSian way and I am simply thrilled, honey. Yeah, this is a perfectly fine BattlARTS

undercard match. The part where they kill each other with forearms is really fun. They set up each flurry of assbeating with a batch of matwork and it's a winning formula here because Yujiro is pretty good at selling. Yujiro is also really good at punching you in the teeth. And so is Shimoda. So I dig this. Shimoda is packed with dickish offense but Yujiro is guy carrying the match. Perfectly fine though the matwork wasn't interesting enough to take up so much of the match. Total stompdownd would have propelled things along a little better. Still...

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PHIL SCHNEIDER'S ON-GOING TOP 20 of 2006

Here is the current list, reviews for the older matches are in previous DVDVR's

1. Chris Benoit v. Finlay WWE 5/21
2. Jun Akiyama v. Masao Inoue NOAH 4/23
3. Rey Mysterio v. Randy Orton WWE 4/4
4. William Regal v. Chris Benoit
5. Chris Benoit v. Finlay WWE 5/3
6. Finlay v. Rey Mysterio WWE 3/20
7. Chris Benoit v. JBL WWE 4/11
8. Homicide v. Necro Butcher 5/13
9. Chris Benoit v. William Regal WWE 5/8
10. American Dragon Brian Danielson v. Samoa Joe ROH 8/6
11. American Dragon Brian Danielson v. Nigel McGuinness ROH 4/29
12. Mistico/Negro Casas v. Averno/Memphisto CMLL 4/15
13. Chris Hero/Necro Butcher/Super Dragon v. Samoa Joe/B.J. Whitmer/Adam Pearce ROH 4/22
14. La Mascara/El Hijo Del Santo v. Blue Panther/Tarzan Boy CMLL GDL 1/1
15. Rey Mysterio v. Mark Henry WWE 1/15
16. Damien Wayne v. Sean Denny NWA-VA 5/6
17. Meiko Satomura v. Aja Kong Sendai Pro Wrestling 7/9
18. L.A. Park/Marco Corleone/Johnny Stamboli v. Dr. Wagner Jr./Dos Caras Jr./Lizmark Jr. CMLL 5/19
19. Sadico v. Terry 2000 AULL 9/13
20. Rey Mysterio v. Finlay 9/5

Previously on the list

- Yuki Ishikawa v. Hiroyuki Ito Big Mouth Loud 5/4
- El Hijo Del Santo/Negro Casas/Mistico v. Atlantis/Black Warrior/Ultimo Guerrerro 8/4
- Low-Ki v. Necro Butcher IWA-MS 4/1
- Rey Mysterio/Bobby Lashley/Chris Benoit v. JBL/Finlay/Randy Orton WWE 2/23
- Samoa Joe v. Necro Butcher IWA-MS 1/12
- Minoru Suzuki vs. Yoshiaki Fujiwara Big Mouth Loud 3/22
- Juventud v. Kid Kash WWE 1/3
- A.J. Styles v. Matt Sydal ROH 1/14
- Samoa Joe v. BJ Whitmer ROH 1/14

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AKIRA vs SHUJI KONDO- ALL JAPAN PRO WRESTLING- 1/8/2006- [DEAN RASMUSSEN]: I haven't seen Shuji Kondo in a while. Prolly 4 years since I've seen him before I kinda phased out that whole genre of wrestle from my wrestling viewing- but if you want to get back into the game, you gotta watch the wrestling. I hear he is different. Schneider digs him- which is odd, knowing Schneider. I shall watch this- because I love AKIRA and it will give me something to gauge it all against. AKIRA is a suave motherfucker. Kondo is JAAAACCKED! and is sporting the Ultimate Warrior bicept tassles- so he 80s retro. Nosawa and Mazada are ringside looking like the sleaziest hominids roaming the earth- as they stop in for a moment from their Baltimore stripclub tour, running trains on cocktail waitresses with artificial limbs or something. AKIRA works the arm. JESUS CHRIST, Kondo works the teeth of Akira's mouth with his elbow. Kondo is different now. AKIRA misses a kick through the ropes to knock Kondo off the apron and Yasshi crushes AKIRA's knee with a chair THUS Kondo concentrates on the knee. AKIRA is thrown to the floor and gorilla slammed onto Nosawa and Mazada- forcing AKIRA to have a Ron Mexico-type testing done the next day, no doubt. AKIRA fights back by dropping Kondo's roid-o-arm over the toprope after fighting out of Superplex. AKIRA- who is a thousand years old- does the tope over the rail and sells the knee as he hits a missile dropkick- going so far as to landing sideways to not land on the bad knee. AKIRA then does the 9 step process of applying the Regal Stretch and you forgot how much you fucking love AKIRA. Brother Yasshi fucks up hitting AKIRA with the blue box thing and the nearfalls start as AKIRA hits a Spinning DDT and a Superfly Splash for two. Kondo swats a dropkick away and applies an INVERTED Texas Cloverleaf, but AKIRA hits the ropes. AKIRA keeps foiling Kondo's attempts to cheat and ends up bumping the ref. AKIRA sells the double dropkick to the face like a fucking KING. The Yasshi/Nosawa/Mazada ringside shenanigans is good at getting the nearfalls to not become annoying. They stand in the middle of the ring and beat the the living dogshit out of each other and then Kondo eats a released German directly on his base of his neck for two. Kondo powers out of a Full Nelson and kicks out of backslide that AKIRA uses to counter a lariat. Kondo then connects on the lariat and then AKIRA leans waaaaay into a final lariat and that is THAT. This match was a load of fun. I dig Kondo. I DIG AKIRA MORE in this. Postmatch, Nosawa and Mazada attack Kondo with ECW plunder. It seems that attacking him with baggies of their yellowish-greyish semen would have truly terrified the roided out freak. Well, obviously. QUALITY PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING.

!@!@!@!@!@! Jerry Blackwell vs Brad Reingans- AWA- sometime around 82ish- [ROB NAYLOR]: I think Jerry Blackwell is one of the most underrated big wrestlers of all time. The dude was speedy for being 472 pounds, had incredible interview skills, everything he did on offense looked mega painful....powerslam, splash, flying kneedrop, headbutt, great punches...on and on. Probably my favorite thing about Blackwell, was he was a big wrestler who was not afraid to sell, bump bigtime and get over wrestlers a ton smaller than him. And he never lost credibility and was consistently one of the most over wrestlers in the AWA from 82-86. I hadn't seen too much Blackwell till I got some stuff of his recently on a comp and OH MY, he was even better than I remembered. The matches that I loved the most were against Brad Reingans. I'm sure I'm butchering his name, but he was the Olympic wrestler everyone loved in the 80's long before Angle popped his first Percocet or Vicodin. Verne loved the wrestlers with the legit backgrounds in wrestling and if Reingans didn't have the charisma of a bag of

doornobs, he might have been somebody. You know what, I'm just gonna call him what inept AWA announcer Rod Trongard used to...Brad RanAGans....its easier. So yeah, Ranagans was always on shows and trained a lot of wrestlers that came thought the AWA. He worked extensively with Saito on Leon White's wrestling, and he was probably the best student ever for them. Well, Brad's best days, imo, were in the early 80's. And against Jerry Blackwell. What a perfect time too, as sports fans were just a half decade removed from when Deitrick the German fucking suplexed the enomous Chris Taylor in the huge Olympic moment. So why not have Brad Ranagans repeat the feat in a worked environment. Blackwell was amazing in these matches. In the one that I recently watched in particular, he did some wrestling and let Brad outwrestle him, then used his bulk to avalanche the Olympian and used his dukes to try to knock him out. Brad's comeback in this particular match rules, as the morbidly obese Blackwell just does the best WEEBLE WOUBLE sell of nearly falling over possible and the fans just are dying to see their boy Brad knock him down. Which finally happens when Ranagans unloads with a sweet flying dropkick. The finish is the best as Brad hits Jerry with a motherfucking BELLY TO BELLY suplex that seemed to defy logic. Given Blackwell was 472 pounds and 400 of them seemed to be in his stomach, this shit was a nutty visual. Winner...Brad Ranagans. He went on to become a footnote in wrestling history and not important overall, but you can't blame the "Mountain from Stone Mountain" for doing his best to make a star here. [Editor's note: It's Brad Rheingans according to Wikipedia, but who could be sure?]

@#@#@#@#@# JYUSHIN THUNTUH LYGER vs RYUSUKE TAGUCHI- NEW JAPAN- 6/2/2006- [DEAN RASMUSSEN]: It's Thursday as I write this and Thursday is my day to look for a good match out of Jushin Thunder Lyger in the grand and glorious modern day. Here he is against the indie-est looking New Japan guy that was the TCU whipping boy in the Kageki 10 man from two DVDVRs ago. His hair is permed and he looks like the Toughest Bruce Hornsby EVER! Lyger is wearing the CTU horned vest frocky thing that you would wear to work everyday of your life if you owned it. Jesus, this goes 19 minutes. Lyger better bring it in this or I might switch Thursdays over to looking for football helmets in the new Polish Football League that sprang up this month (GO JACKALS!!). Lyger does the basic bow-and-arrow into a Mexican ceiling hold that he is doing in every match every time to kill time and make me hate watching him. They knucklelock and Lyger turns it into more lucha libre approximation timekillers EN LIEU of hate or neat matwork or anything to make me give a crap about the match. But it's early. They work out of headlock and Tagushi does a lot of dropkicks and a SilverKing dive to the floor from the cattycorner second rope. Taguchi makes with gentle loving chops and Lyger responds with a shotay in the corner and into a backbreaker and this really hasn't heated up to anything at this point. And we get the Mexican Ceiling Hold derivation and the NOAH Invasion seems like four lifetimes ago. Jiminy, 10 more minutes of this? More lucha submissions indifferently sold into a less than devastating Camel Clutch and it's gonna hurt until we get to the end. Taguchi throws a couple of forearms and gets half-heartedly shotayed and this isn't getting to the really good part yet I'm assuming. Taguchi goes on offense and he is quite the Bob Holly of Japan on offense. Lyger gets in a nice powerbomb to wake me and goes back on offense and Lyger Bombs Taguchi for a two count but Taguchi FIGHTS out of toprope Frankensteiner to miss a missile dropkick and this is starting to resemble Hugh Morris trying to go 15 minutes with Psicosis on Nitro- in that Taguchi has no actual offense and doesn't hit any of it very well when he does get

any in. Lyger is in the Psicosis roll of just trying to keep him from fucking anything up. Toprope Brainbuster for TWO! They try to make Taguchi look like he is having a hot comeback by having him kick out of a bunch of stuff but 95% of his offense is so shitty and tentative that you never buy that he made past the 5th minute, much less pull the upset. Lyger's vertical hierarchy of booking only works when the guys he's putting over seem to be worth a shit. So far, no such luck.

!@!@!@!@!@!@ Killer Karl Kox with Bobby Heenan vs. Stan Hansen – sometime in slow and syrupy good Georgia time- [RAVEN MACK]: Hansen is your Georgia state television champion, and this was sent to me by my man Lee down in Florida, who had to be overseas in whichever wars we're in now while his firstborn became born, but now he's home, and politics means nothing because he's just a man looking to pay the bills and I'm just a man looking to pay the bills and we both enjoy a good Tommy Rich match and we both enjoy a good cold beer and sometimes I wish politics was more like collecting money amongst a group of people playing cards to make a beer run before the store closes, but that analogy would only ruin making beer runs. Gordon Solie does a fine job at setting up how tenacious these two men are and how the ref is gonna have one dollybrook of a time trying to keep this one in containment. Hansen's early offense is the dreaded Texas Side Headlock. Oh, the beers Hansen and Kox must've shared in Georgia bars during this time. Kox takes control and throws better punches and stomps than almost anybody you could see today, but he does it with baldheaded flair. And now, Ernie Ladd has joined Gordon in the commentary booth, and polishes his wrestling boots with Stan Hansen's cowboy hat, which draws the attention, and then ire of Stan, which leads to a count-out victory for Killer Karl Kox. Holy fuck, if there's a Hansen/Ladd match coming up on this shit, I'm stoked. And to make it perfect old school territorial clusterfuck TV, Tommy Rich dashes in wearing a three-piece suit sans the jacket and pummels and bites blood from Killer Karl Kox's forehead. Goddamn, I am an old old man because this all makes so much sense to me while I could give less than half a fuck about a SUPER INDY CRUISER SHOWDOWN MOTYC-OF-THE-WEEKEND!

%^%^%^%^%^%^%^%^ Mushiking Terry vs Atsushi Aoki- NOAH- 9/9/06- [DEAN RASMUSSEN]: I can't remember if this is Rickey Marvin or Kentaro Suzuki. Aoki might be the guy that SUWA punched in the jaw. But probably not. Aoki is all fiery and fired up and takes a couple hip tosses in anger. They do some mirroring highflying and this is your opening match and it is truly the opening match. THEN. Aoki takes it to the street, daddy! He works over Terry's shoulder by ramming it into the ringpost and Terry is a MAN and fucking LEANS into it like this isn't a heatless opening match. Aoki hits a dropkick and keylocks young MushiKing Terry. Terry escapes and drives his own shoulder into the ringpost while missing a corner charge. Ah fuck, I think I like Mushiking Terry. I'm sorry, I gotta respect that much love of the craft. HEY! They still have 7 minutes to kill. This could start hurting. They do some stuff and I watch some of that SpongeBob SquarePants on the higher channels of my cable box. Terry does a little lowgrade highspots and Aoki hits a hammerlock to the dismay of the ADORABLE little girl at ringside. Hell, I need to get my four year old and my 18 month old into Mushiking Terry. It's better than that fucking BOOBAH show. Sorta. Terry hits a nice Death Valley Bomb for two and a Mortal for two and a nice Tiger Suplex With a Bridge for the win. The children were happy and it's all

about the kids. I will not go into my own childhood wrestling experiences that involve watching Harley Race piledrive a bloodsoaked BlackJack Mulligan onto the floor of the Scope Coliseum in Norfolk. I think it made me stronger. Well. It looked really cool. Blackjack bled like a complete motherfucker.

\$%\$%\$%\$%\$%\$%\$%\$ Terry Taylor/ Chris Adams vs Ted Dibiase/ Sam Houston- UWF 4/1987?- [ROB NAYLOR]: This is a great, rarely pimped match. It also MAY have been Dibiase's very last match working for Bill Watts, as he'd go on that summer to become "rich" in the WWF. A lot of fans nowadays shit on "Technical" or "Scientific" matches, without a good guy and a bad guy, but I think occasional matches like this are fantastic. Fans here cheered for both teams and it made for an exciting tv main event atmosphere. Adams and Taylor, imo, are not given their due as a great team. Adams was a fantastic tag wrestler in the 80's and had great teams with Taylor and Gino Hernandez and the Iceman King Parsons. Taylor, before he became a fucking bird in the WWF, was one of the "can't miss" superstars in all of wrestling. Meanwhile, Dibiase at this stage had a ton of heat as a good guy coming off a great feud with Michael Hayes and even pinning Terry Gordy in a non title match. Houston, meanwhile, was always just underutilized. I actually believe he could have been just as big a star as his bro Jake, if he hadn't have outside of the ring issues and got bigger pushes. I really would love to see if any of the late 86 matches he had with Bill Dundee in Central States are on tape. It was one of the few places I recall that really gave Houston a main event spot. Sure the guy was skinny, but he just took the best bumps, honestly some of the best bumps in wrestling were taken by Sam Houston. I vividly recall Dennis Condrey taking his goddamn head of on a running lariat. In this match, it was Adams that turned him inside out with a sick clothesline. This match went to a TEN minute draw, but I honestly would love to see a ton more matches like this out there today. I don't always care to see a decisive decision...but if you get four wrestlers, give them 10 minutes to get a win over their opponents....the pace will quicken, they'll try more stuff early, realizing time is against them and it will foster a great exciting atmosphere. BEAT THE CHAMP type scenarios on tv wrestling all through the eighties were very effective at getting underdog challengers over. This match didn't have any long "heat" segment or some crazy psychology to it, but it definitely kept my interest as well as the live fans interest at this event as well. I see Goodhelmet has this match on his Dibiase comp, along with 50 plus other cool things. I highly advise people check it out. Dibiase, even prior to Million Dollar Man, had killer matches and feuds and should be recognized for them. His turn on JYD, in particular, was always a favorite of mine.

!@!@!@!@! TAKASHI IIZUKA vs NAOFUMI YAMAMOTO- NEW JAPAN- 3/12/2006- [DEAN RASMUSSEN]: Yamamoto isn't in against Sai so I got my doubts. I haven't seen a Iizuka match- other than that Yoshie match in MUGA- since Nagai put him on the shelf for a year. I get a bad feeling that this could turn out like Bobby Eaton versus Lash LaRue from 1999 WCW Saturday Night but all I can do is watch and hope. Iizuka has Japanese Fake Queen music to show you how old school he is. This goes four minutes as a completely heatless pointless exercise in stalemation until Iizuka lands a shoulderblock and a halfcrab to make this MUGA exciting. Yamamoto escapes and we have four minutes of stoic stalemates- as Yamamoto works Iizuka's knee and clubbers a bit and hits some bodyslams and they do some chops. Iizuka stomps to

TRANSITION! setting up his Sidewalk Slam for one and very nice Vertical Suplex. MUGA has taken over the New Japans but this match goes 16 minutes- whereas this kind of build-up in MUGA would sustain a 45 minute match- so 10 minutes in and I'm still torn. They heat it up a little by exchanging forearms until lizuka beats him down. Yamamoto starts using his flashy kicks and lizuka cuts him with a half crab. lizuka does a supersweet kneebar and this is quite the opening match of Two Memorable things. lizuka makes it three with a really nice Superplex for two. lizuka want a Battle Of The Network Shoulderblocks but Yamzz opts to kick lizuka in assorted ways- including a very nice Manami Toyota-style Missile Dropkick which sets up a Boston Crab. lizuka does a forearm smashes after escaping and this match isn't going anywhere. lizuka does a hit a preposterously beautiful Capture Suplex and then gets the win with a BUZZKILLER! This was quite a bit like Bobby Eaton and Lash LaRue on WCWSN 1999. Except Bobby wouldn't have gone over in that match. So you got that at least. Yeesh.

Tommy Rich vs. Dennis Condrey – sometime Georgia- [RAVEN MACK]: Rich is the National TV champion, and the situation here is if he wins, he will retire as champ and there will be a tourney. But of course Condrey is here to fuck that plan all to hell and just take the goddamned title away, right here on TV, where TV titles were meant to be defended. Tommy Rich had a blonde hair that only a man from this time could have. Blonde hair like that doesn't grow on kids, much less adults anymore, most likely because of the Sugarhill Gang. So what's the deal with Rich? What is the real so-called story behind his NWA reign? I always thought it was he let some dude suck his dick, and if I could just let some dude suck my dick to be 1982 or 1983 NWA World Champion, even if just for five days, I'd totally let that happen. Wouldn't do it to be 2002 or 2003 NWA World Champion though.

Dennis Condrey turns the momentum during run-the-ropes episode with a knee to the gut - always such a great move. Both Condrey and Rich stand at least half a foot taller than the ref, making this seem like it might be, you know, an actual athletic contest of some sort involving strong men while some dork makes sure they don't cheat, as opposed to looking like two dorks having some sort of athletic contest while some other far chubbier dork makes sure they don't cheat. This is also an old grainy piece of footage, but digitized... still, Condrey looks at best to me like the cowardly lion wearing nothing but French-ish swimming trunks. Dutch Mantel shows up ringside to issue words of encouragement to Dennis Condrey, and to make this maybe the greatest collection of hair I've had on my computer at once since I found that hippiegoddess.com website a couple months back. Two men against one takes advantage, and almost as if scripted, Gordon Solie reiterates how Rich is the number one contender to the NWA World title in Georgia currently, making a dastardly stealing of the title by Condrey even more important. But then they take it home with a Rich roll-up, then post-match Rich thanks the fans for their support and just gives the title to Solie, like he said he would. And the push goes one step higher.

Holy fuck, some fat dude who's not Gordon Solie but is an announcer says there's a clip coming of Tommy Rich giving his own random thoughts with some music behind it. This shit is gonna be the greatest. Wildfire is in sweat suit and gets in Trans Am and rides off, rocking out to Willie Nelson while camera shots of the open-ended highway interlude. Tommy talks while images of him lacing his boots go by about saying he'd never wrestle in Atlanta again after letting the fans down after not beating Harley Race, and he went home to Nashville to stay with his momma,

and wrestled there, but nothing would work and he was getting beat down because he was at his lowest point. And then that machine glitches too and there's no more robots in this house that play these new-fangled DVDs, but I can tell you this much... Rich runs through the woods and realizes Atlanta is his new home and he's coming back, because sometimes as adults, we feel like we've failed, so we run home to lick our wounds, but home isn't home anymore and is more of a failure than what we were running from. So we go back out and kick some motherfuckin' ass, on our own terms, where we have no family tree history. Of course, sometimes this leads to us being degenerate pervert alcoholics, but even in those occasions, if you can make for legendary stories, who the fuck cares. We may all be comfortable in our individual computer-based lifestyles, secure in our finances and material situations, but will anyone ever be stoked to see us standing outside a hotel room drink machine trying to throw quarters into the slot for three hours straight? Of course not, we're all internet pussies. Wildfire cannot be contained within the cold wires of robot machinery; this is why no DVD player in my house could play this shit. I should be outside burning the two old dressers and limbs from a cherry tree that got struck by lightning last spring that I stacked up earlier this week out in the field.

YUJI NAGATA/ TOMOHIRO IISHI vs HIROSHI TANAHASHI/ TAKASHI IIZUKA- NEW JAPAN PRO WRESTLING- 3/17/2006- [DEAN RASMUSSEN]: Hey, more Iizuka. If I really needed to be caught up with his Jerry Flynn-styled pro wrestlings, I am definitely on my way. I'm sure it will dawn on me who this Iishi guy is. Tanahashi and Nagata start with Nagata working the arm and Tanahashi firing back with his Tito Sanatana Lite offence. His Flying Burrito doesn't look like a credible finisher like it does in the hands of a Sanatana, a Fernandez or a Taylor. Iishi and Iizuka battle it out in a battle of Guys With The Same Vowel To Help Me Pronounce Their Names- so I don't really have a dog in this fight, as I appreciate the linguistic helper provided by each. Luckily, neither inspire to get beyond not giving a crap. Iishi does drop the shittiest Brian Lee Elbow Non-Elbow Drop I've seen in a while. Thus, I am all about the Iizuka. Iizuka goes all Kurt Angle on the Nagata kicks and procures the ankle lock for a moment. Nagata kicks the fuck out of Iizuka and Iizuka leans into it like a guy who WASN'T knocked out for an entire year. Eventually Iizuka and Iishi end up in the ring together and it's much better to watch wrestling if you can really hate one of the guys because he does the elbow drop where he is getting up from the elbow drop before he even lands. Tanahashi and Nagata beat on each other for a minute and it's fine. I dunno what it is about Tanahashi's offence that I hate. It just doesn't have any weight behind or something. It doesn't look like it hurts. Thus he isn't a very good wrestler. There. I figured it out as I typed it. Actually, when I get past the crappy elbowdrop, Iishi is pretty fun on offence- as he really beat the hell out of Iizuka during the final third of the match. Iishi over Iizuka because of that and the perfectly fine brainbuster. Tanahashi hits a bunch of SWINGBLADOOOOS! and- God!- do they suck. Iizuka and Iishi finally battle it out at the end and Iizuka is all nifty with the swanky Capture Suplex to lead into the Sleeper that he holds onto even after being Judo flipped. Very okay example of The Professional Wrestling. I am back to a stalemate with Iizuka and Iishi and my levels of love for each.

%%%%%%%% Ric Flair vs. Ricky Morton - sometime in cages with Japanese commentators- [RAVEN MACK]:

I get things from people, and am not the anal labelling librarian type. I will most likely watch this and either throw it in a pile of other things that eventually get stepped on and broke, then thrown away, or I will mail it to someone who mails me something. With wrestling DVDs, I do not aim to recreate the material clutter of VHS tapes, and I know it is easy to think, "But they're smaller and you can put everything down into a smaller amount of stuff space-wise," but I think fuck that. New technologies are meant to simplify our lives, so why carry around all the burdens of my past but on a new-fangled format?

This is from right after Ricky Morton got his face rubbed in the concrete, because he's wearing that Richard Hamilton facemask thing. The commentary is in Japanese, but the screams are American, and Morton is on Flair right away, backing him begging into a corner, with no ringside area to escape to.

You know, the whole full disclosure but through the filter of whatever you disclose through thing that post-kayfabe wrestling does - I find it sad. I read that stupid Ric Flair "autobiography" written by Vince McMahon's writers last year, and it was sad to see this womanizing, overly confident, gold belt wearer come off as a pathetic old man with no self-confidence. I mean, how can you be Ric fuckin' Flair and not have self-confidence? I guess the wrestling industry for men is akin to the porn industry for women and you are always fighting to maintain your spot on the payroll, and the higher your spot, the harder you have to fight (or do morally compromising things, or demand that you'd never do morally compromising things because it's beneath you, or something). And I guess people loving to read little tidbits about other people's lives kinda creeps me out, too, just like housewives actually buying those celebrity gossip mags at supermarket check-outs kinda creep me out. I hope my life never sucks so much I need to know that much about famous faces, whether wrassler or media slut. I don't find it creepy at all that while that book was coming out, Ricky Morton was in jail for failure to pay child support. That I can understand. I always assumed the Polaroids he sold to benefit "The Children's Miracle Network" was just his way of saying "buying a pack of cigarettes and sending some money back to this bitch I had a kid with" anyways.

Morton rubs Flair's eyes along the top rope, referencing his own injury, and then Flair looks to go out the door, but it is locked, showing the entrapment of grudge. Little shit, that gets lost in the real-time watching, but adds up to things that elevate shitty fake fighting to THE MOTHERFUCKIN' BEAUTY OF PROFASSIONAL WRASSLIN'! Morton keeps going towards mangling Flair's face, and Morton was always the pretty boy, so his face-rubbing angle has highlights of man jealousy. Flair goes to punch Morton, but hits the mask, Morton no-sells and Flair hops around shaking his hand and he has created this dilemma for himself. He is a man who has created an ugly monster, and now is trapped to face the ugly monster he has created. But then on top of this, the thing most precious to him, his title belt, is on the line as well, beyond the normal prideful evil vs. soulful good storyline. Will that belt cause evil to find some soulful good inside himself to stay on top? Or will the evil that has been unleashed in Ricky Morton stand with upraised arms at the end of the match? Motherfucker, you know Ricky Morton never held no damned NWA World titles. But yeah, all that was there for the live audience to wonder about.

Tommy Young is ref, and I remember reading somewhere how his career-ending injury left him with a hole in his back. What the fuck do you do as a ref to end up with a hole in your back? I mean, modern medicine and surgery and all is crazy. They can clone pigs for human hearts and

make a rhesus monkey glow like a jellyfish. Do people actually still have to go around with holes in their back because of back injuries? It makes me envision Tommy Young as homeless, walking somewhere within ten blocks of either the Charlotte bus station or the UNC-Charlotte campus wearing old corduroys and a white Chicago Bulls World Champions t-shirt from the Salvation Army with a big ol' oozing blood stain on his back, asking liberal-looking white dudes for change.

Flair is being pummelled and finally goes to climb over the top, leading to Morton pulling Flair's trunks down to show his ass like he loves to do. I'm comfortable enough in my repressed homosexuality to say that Flair has a pretty nice ass for a guy. Morton even puts on the figure-four and Flair writhes in the added pain the tarheel blue-and-white checkered bandanna causes him when pressed into his calf muscle. Ends with Tommy Young ref bump as Morton does the sunset flip, but Young comes to, gets to two before Flair rolls it over one more time and yanks on the trunks for the win. Not a great match in the sense it has amazing things you never ever did saw before, but a great enough match in that it highlights all the important bullet points of their intertwined story at the time. Seems to me a lot of times, matches tend to assume you already know all that shit and don't need it subliminally reinforced. People, no matter how smart they get by reading things like Ric Flair's autobiography, are still stupider than fuck, and the little subliminal things are still important.

&*~*~*~*~*~* YUJI NAGATA/TAKASHI IIZUKA/ NAOFUMI YAMAMOTO vs MANABU NAKANISHI/ HIROSHI TANAHASHI/ TAKASHI UWANO- NEW JAPAN PRO WRESTLING- 5/28/2006- [DEAN RASMUSSEN]: Jesus, so much Iizuka on hard drive at work. Yamamoto I was indifferent towards but then I saw his shirt with the m-16 and the New Japan half lion head and half skull and now I back his play 100%. He is in with the Brooklyn Brawler of New Japan- Uwano- and he is giving him the business. Yamamoto needs to start drinking beer before getting in the ring maybe coming out to "Green Grass And Hightides Forever" by the Outlaws to make the SHIRT a part of his wrestling REALITY. Iizuka and Uwano in the ring at the same time will remind you of Hugh Morris and Kenny Kaos going at it on Thunder. Luckily, Nagata tags in and Nagata really just beats the living dogshit out of him for your and my amusement. And it is amusing. Then he tags in Iizuka so I can make ANOTHER WCW THUNDER joke as Takashi Uwano is an anagram for W-a-y-n-e B-l-o-o-m and Takashi Iizuka is an anagram E-x-t-r-a S-t-r-e-n-g-t-h N-y-Q-u-i-l. Manabooo tags in and busts up Iizuka in a comical fashion before Iizuka goes hogwild fending off Nakanishi and Tanahashi (unless they are on the same team. There is so much Mega Fight Blandness! going on all at once that it's all kinda engulfing everything in a giant blur of crappy unsold half crabs.) Nagata kicks the shit out of Tanahashi with assorted kicks to the teeth to wake me from my lethargy. Tanahashi's Ace Darling 2K6 offense lulls me back to sleep and he hates me by tagging in Uwano. They all beat up on Nagata to set up Manaboooo's spear and Uwano's... I guess "devastating" missile dropkick and Nagata scoffs at it, Shines the Wizard in the corner, busts a brain and does the SWEET Backdrop Driver Into A Pinning Predicament for the win. I liked the aggressive boringness of this match. It gave me time to think up a lot of jokes about wrestlers I hadn't thought of in a while. I wrote a review of this wrestling match and it worked for me (from my standpoint and my feeling about this review anyway). If you aren't actually going to write a wrestling review about this

match, you really don't have enough of a reason to watch this match. If you are writing a review, this is your boy.

~!~!~!~!~!~!~ SHINJIRO OHTANI/ RYOUJI SAI/ FUYUKI TAKAHASHI vs KAZUNARI MURAKAMI/ KATSUMI USUDA/ MANABU HARA- ZERO-1 MAX- 8/24/2006- [DEAN RASMUSSEN]: (The sullen and melancholy Lenny posted this. We would thank if we thought it would make him feel any better.) I was thinking Manabu Hara was the same Hara that tagged with Tenryu against Onita and Goto and the guy who had that match against Champagne Gerry Morrow that all the nerds putting the Other Japan 80s ballot together all shat upon because they suck. But I looked him up at Stuart's indispensible Puroresu website and am reminded that he is the last of the BattlARTS guys. So it's win/win. And this is fucking STACKED with guys I used to love (Ohtani, Usuda), love (Murakami) or am growing to love (Sai) and Takahashi- all in one little SPECTRUM of Dean's Japanese wrestling Fandom. Let us walk down the lane, shall we? Sai in the non-invader role will be a new sensation for me and one hopes that it is better than Yujiro and Yamamoto's non-defender roles. Though Sai is in the defender role here as the opposing team is Team Big Mouth Loud. I quickly look up Takahashi and see that he is former IWA Japan and I wonder what he wrestled as back then. Here he wrestles as the guy that Murakami kicks right in the face. Murakami is a complete asshole in this and that is why you and I love him. Takahashi has a little comical comeback and they corral him into the corner and Usuda tags in and beats the crap out of him for a minute before GOING BACK TO HIS PWFG ROOTS and sinking in a Fujiwara Armbar. Sai breaks up the hold and allows Takahashi to get an opening and allows Sai to tag in and get the hell beat outta him for a while. Usuda was never the greatest guy in BattlARTS but he could have really fucking great matches- see his match against Yamakawa- and here he takes an assbeating from Sai like a man. Sai and Murakami trade kicks and it pretty much is to get Ohtani into the ring. Sai the non-invader isn't as cool as Sai the invader- though it's pretty obvious that Sai and Yamamoto have a special hateful magic going on. Murakami is sooooo much fun kicking the fuck out of Ohtani. I forgot how much I love Murakami. Ohtani no-sells Hara's offense and it's up to Sai to make Hara look good- and he does so with gusto, leaning rib first on the run into a kick and then having the hot exchange to come back on Hara- including the TRULY hideous toprope doublestomp for the pin. Postmatch, Sai gets all up in Murakami's grill. Fuck that, I want to see Sai vs Hara for 20 minutes. Ah Usuda, I guess the rent gets paid....

A.J. Styles vs. Air Paris vs. Sabu – 12/14/00 – NWA Wildside-[RAVEN MACK]: Styles is almost NWA champ at this point, and under the evil spell of Jeff G. Bailey, and back in Georgia to fight Air Paris. I guess Sabu is champ and he is injured and if he can't defend the title, Styles is champ. I have always thought of A.J. Styles and Air Paris together, because they were both in Wildside when WCW came looking for young talent, and I think they were both in that initial 6-man match that was on Nitro or some shit, and their paths since then have been completely opposite, even though they were pretty much right there together at that point. A.J. Styles is now SUPERSTAR and Air Paris is that guy you probably avoid even though you're glad to see he's still alive in passing. Lights go out and Air Paris is in the ring. I would bet this somehow involved a mandatory title match and Sabu's RV getting sidetracked by a vaporizer and a half ounce of weed somewhere between Bombay and Cornelia, so Air Paris fills the gap. Paris calls

Styles a “pussy” sounding like a shop class redneck, and early on, Styles is made to look better than Paris, which is probably a smart move to protect his elevated status within the wrestling political business machine. But Air Paris takes over, because he’s a simple Georgia boy full of heart, not all glossed out by international success or corrupted by stupid evil Jeff G. Bailey like A.J. Styles is. A.J.’s forgotten his roots, man; he’s changed. Shaky ropes are climbed by Styles to miss a corkscrew senton, and then Paris to miss a corkscrew moonsault. Table is set up ringside of course, and Styles lays Paris out on it of course, and lights go off down in Georgia of course, and it’s Sabu of course. He knocks Styles down, does errant dive to bust up Paris through the table, and then hits Styles with a chair. He does all his signature moves and nonsense, but in the dark church-like cavern of the NCW Arena, with his jaw all taped up because it is probably broken in five pieces and he drank some crazy glue hoping to hold himself together until Van Dam came back from San Diego with another box full of Tijuana soma.

One thing that has reinvigorated me towards the stupid professional wrestling lately has been embracing my inner-mark. Internet nerdery over wrestling is this weird little fringe element to a sub-culture where people attach all this ego to something that has absolutely no meaning to anybody outside of the fringe sub-culture. I don’t “need” to see any wrestling match ever, nor do I really give a fuck about the business side of it. I am just a stupid wrestling fan, which you have to be to watch this shit enthusiastically. And I love Sabu. And I know that’s stupid. But to not love him is to stupid. To invest any time towards a logical or emotional decision as to the merits of Sabu is stupid. But for me, he could blow every spot ever for the rest of his life, but just the fact he’s a scarred-up longhaired freak in baggy, shiny, deranged genie pants will keep him one of the five best wrestlers ever forever in my mind. Sabu sets a table up in the ring, and the screen fades to blue, and when it comes back on it’s not the same match. That’s perfect – I have been duped by the television show from six years ago. Well I guess I’ll just have to embrace my inner-mark tightly and drive to fuckin’ rural-ass Georgia next weekend to see Fright Night and steal a DVD of this shit from the merchandise table. And I’m gonna eat me some boiled peanuts, too..

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NEXT TIME! Soooooo much New Japan. That WORLD OF SPORT. I MEAN IT THIS TIME. Maybe that Dragon Gate. Yet still more WxW. Stuff.

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8 FISTS IN THE FACE OF WRESTLING

THE DEATH VALLEY PLAYAZ